



Superior Court of California County of Riverside

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MEDIA ADVISORY

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(Electronic version available at:

<http://riverside.courts.ca.gov/media/media.shtml>

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT CELEBRATES JUROR APPRECIATION WEEK 2012 – *Focus on the courtroom – Celebrating jurors and raising awareness of new guidelines on the use of social media during jury service.*

RIVERSIDE COUNTY: Riverside County Superior Court celebrates the 15th anniversary of Juror Appreciation Week, May 14 to 18. The California Legislature designates the week each year to honor the important contributions of citizens who devote their time and effort in making the right of trial by jury a reality.

Advances in technology have presented both benefits and challenges in the courtroom and for jurors. In recognizing the meaningful role of jurors and providing access to fair and impartial justice, courts statewide are instructing jurors to turn off social media, as required under the Code of Civil Procedure and the Penal Code sections amended by Assembly Bill 141.

“With the growing use of social media, the court is directing jurors not to ‘tag,’ ‘friend,’ and ‘tweet’ about anything that takes place in the courtroom,” said Presiding Judge Sherrill A. Ellsworth. “We want jurors to be aware that researching and disseminating trial-related information is prohibited. As we move forward with the many accomplishments in the jury system, drawing attention to social media restrictions will allow jurors and litigants to continue to benefit from impartial and fair trials.”

In addition to the rise of social media, there have been numerous other changes to jury service in California over the last 15 years. Two notable improvements are the one-day or one-trial system that makes jury service more manageable, and plain-language jury instructions that makes jury service more understandable.

Approximately 10 million Californians are summoned to jury service each year and about 200,000 citizens are sworn as trial jurors. The number of jurors who completed their service in one day increased from 66 percent in 2001 to 83 percent in 2010.

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